



Seeing red: in a brief respite from breaking stuff, Craig finds the time to sing a song



# ANOTHER VINES MESS

**DESPITE A SIX-WEEK LAYOFF, CRAIG NICHOLLS' APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION IS UNDIMINISHED**

**THE VINES**  
Seattle Moore Theatre  
March 19

Minutes after George Bush announces the start of hostilities in Iraq, The Vines kick off a campaign of their own in the trigger-happy president's homeland. It's only the band's second gig in six weeks and, frankly, they appear to be a little rusty.

But the layoff does not appear to have dulled frontman Craig Nicholls' appetite for destruction. Opener 'In The Jungle' is barely halfway through when the curtain-fringed singer breaks his first microphone stand of the evening.

Over the next 40 minutes, he will do this 12 more times and knock over Hamish Rosser's drumkit twice, both times mid-song. By the end of the set Nicholls has wreaked so much carnage his hapless roadie deserves a curtain call. After all, he has spent nearly as much time onstage clearing up as the singer.

Nicholls and his bandmates seem far less animated, or alive, than usual and it's only during the third encore that he really gets going, hawking up venom in the singalong chorus of 'Fuck The World' with a delightful howl during the last, and best, of three unreleased songs played tonight.

Both of the other two newbies – 'Amnesia', which features a lazy psychedelic Syd Barrett vibe à la 'Autumn Shade', and 'Evil Town' which possesses some angular guitar wrangling and strangling – are met with a muted response, unlike 'Outtathaway!', 'Get Free' and the cover of OutKast's 'Ms Jackson' which has the audience heaving like a tumultuous sea of hair and limbs. Overall, however, there's a (probably deliberate) lack of cohesion.

Tonight can be considered a no-score draw but the vision is as beguiling as ever.

**Kevan Roberts**